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SUBJECT: IRAN/ISRAEL: REGIME INSIDER REPORTEDLY PASSES
TOUGH PRIVATE MESSAGE ON ISRAELI HOSTAGES

REF: A. EMB LONDON (GAYLE) E-MAILS WITH NEA/IR 3/31/09
AND PREVIOUS

[¶](#)B. 08 LONDON 002691 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Classified By: Political Counselor Richard Mills, Jr.
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[¶](#)1. (S/NF) Summary: IRGC figure Salman Safavi (refs) on April 6 reportedly said Iran's senior leadership has "no interest in engagement" with a Netanyahu government on the subject of Israeli IDF hostages possibly held by Hamas, according to a regular Embassy London contact who said he has, at Israeli Embassy request, periodic contact with Safavi. End Summary.

Continuing Talks Between
Israeli Embassy in UK and
Safavi, Conducted via Gluck

[¶](#)2. (S/NF) Rabbi Hershel Gluck, a UK citizen and regular participant in policy discussions hosted by the U.S. Embassy-supported NGO Next Century Foundation has previously told (ref b) London Iran Watcher (poloff) of Gluck's periodic private meetings held over the last several years in London with Ayatollah Syed Salman Safavi, brother of ex-IRGC commander and current Khamenei Military Advisor Rehman Safavi. Gluck on April 7 told Poloff had just met with Safavi, at the behest of the Israeli Embassy, with the fate of Israeli IDF hostages possibly in the hands of Hamas or Hizballah the focus. Gluck reports that Safavi speaks elliptically and that, though Safavi refers specifically to Hamas and Hizballah and to specific hostages as if they were alive, he has never offered Gluck unambiguous "proof of life." Gluck told Poloff he continues the conversations with the realization that the IDF members involved may in fact be long dead.

[¶](#)3. (S/NF) Gluck stated that Safavi is aware of Gluck's relationship with the Israeli embassy, but that he is uncertain whether Safavi is aware that Gluck discusses with Poloff the substance of Gluck's private meetings with Safavi.

A Tough Line From Safavi, Which
Rabbi Sees as Bargaining Tactic

[¶](#)4. (S/NF) In response to a recent Gluck query about IDF soldier Gila Chilat, who according to Gluck is believed by many Israelis to be a hostage of Hamas and whom Gluck had

discussed with Safavi before, Safavi reacted furiously, referencing numerous recent Palestinian deaths in Gaza and saying "there can be no agreement after Gaza." Gluck said this explosion was the most negative he had ever seen Safavi in their multi-year relationship, but that this may well be posturing for negotiating purposes. Gluck noted Safavi knows the origin of their meetings and could, if his principals in Tehran were truly disinterested, simply refuse to meet him. Gluck also noted Safavi was uncharacteristically late for their meeting, an omission which Gluck took to be part of the message. Gluck also asked Safavi about missing Israeli Air Force airman Rom Arad: Safavi reportedly responded Arad was "not my responsibility;" Gluck said that, in the context of their ongoing conversations, Safavi meant Arad, in contrast to Chilat, is not being held by a client organization with which Safavi or his principals have a relationship.

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